

North Bethesda Bus Rapid Transit Planning Study

Online Open House

Meeting Agenda

- Project Overview
 - *What is Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)*
 - *Purpose & Background*
 - *Study Schedule*
 - *Goals and Objectives*
 - *Corridor Foundations*
- Termini Screening
- Questions & Comments



Project Overview

A Snapshot of Project Progress

What is Bus Rapid Transit?

- Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is a **faster** and **more reliable** bus system.
- BRT routes in Montgomery County are branded under the network name, **Flash**.
- Benefits include →

FLASH IS GREAT BECAUSE:



Faster Travel – Frequent Service, Fewer Stops



Stations include weather protection, real-time transit information, seating and lighting



Buses communicate with traffic signals to keep moving



Dedicated bus lanes where feasible, reducing delays



Quick boarding at all doors. Easy entry for wheelchairs, strollers and bicycles



Safe access to stations



Riding Flash keeps you active and healthier



Riding Flash instead of driving a car can save you money

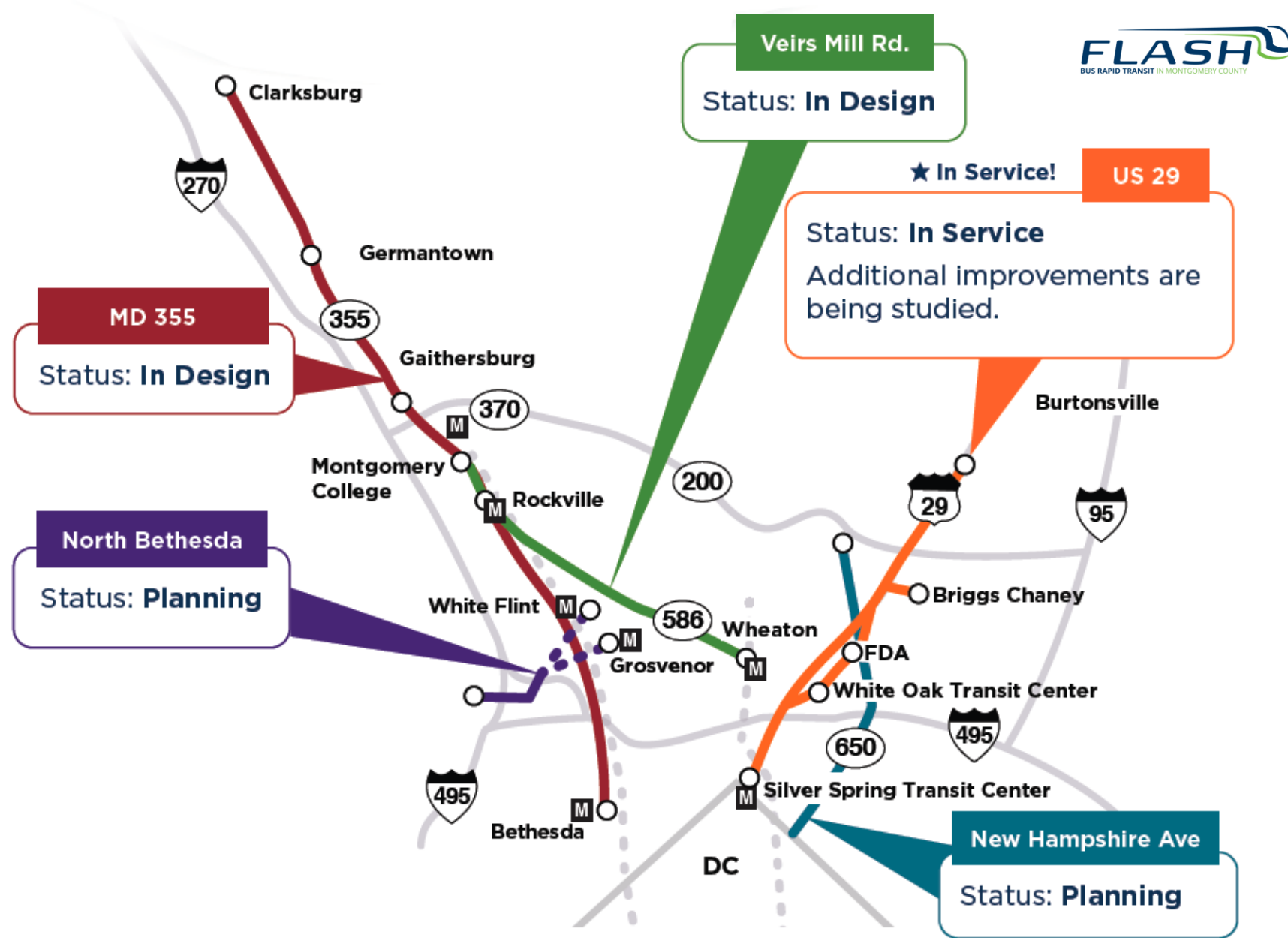


Better for the environment



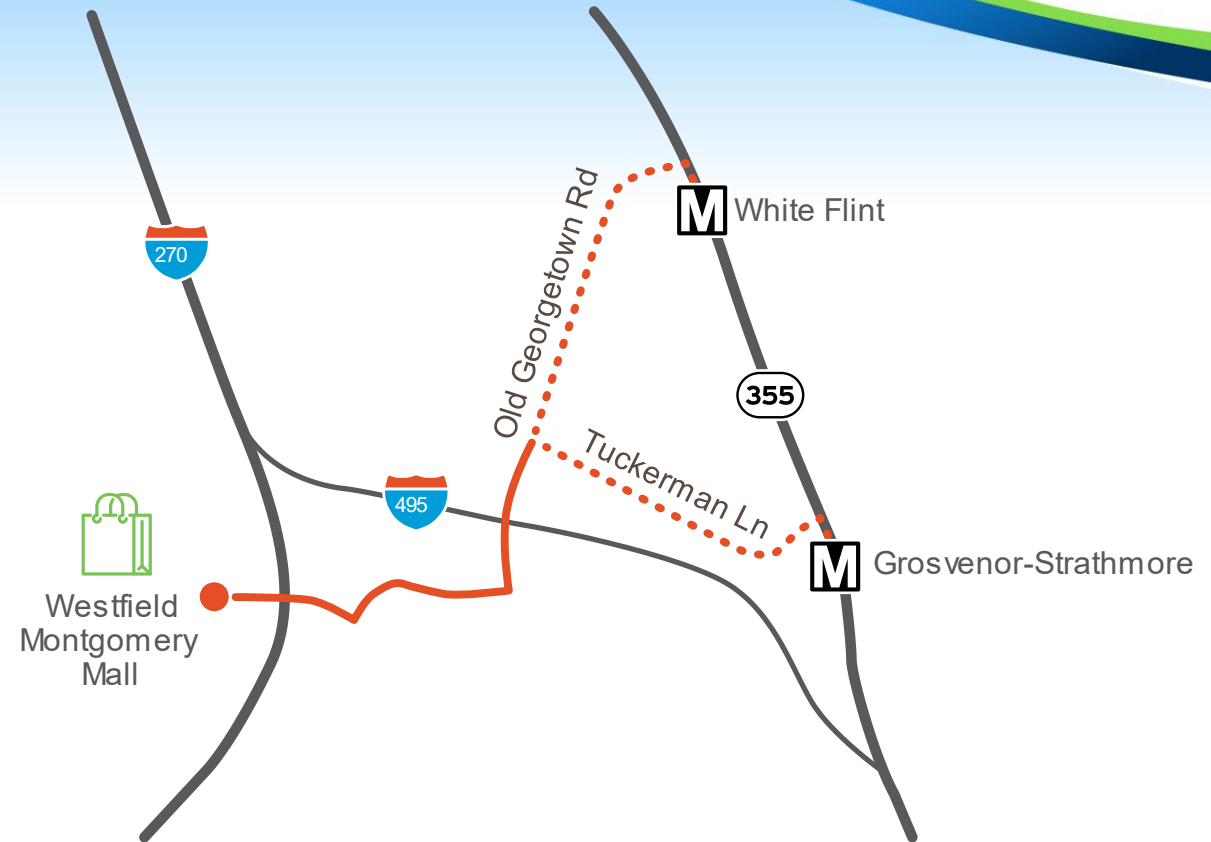
Flash BRT Active Network

- Ten BRT routes were proposed in the 2013 master plan
- Of the 10 routes:
 - 1 in service
 - 2 in the planning stage
 - 2 in the design stage



North Bethesda Transitway Planning Study

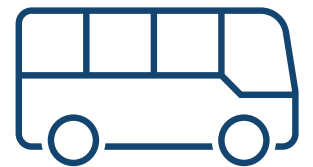
- Corridor Extends from 2013 Master Plan:
 - **Western Terminus:** Westfield Montgomery Mall
 - **Eastern Terminus:** White Flint or Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail station
- Study Outcomes:
 - What type of BRT service is needed in this area
 - Select an eastern terminus
 - Designate alignment types
 - *Dedicated BRT lanes vs. mixed traffic*
 - Confirm stop locations



The North Bethesda Flash will connect to the MD355 and Randolph Road BRT services and will integrate with future BRT routes.

Bus Rapid Transit Project

WE ARE HERE



Study Schedule



Goals and Objectives



Quality Service

Provide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service



Mobility Choices

Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities



Sustainable Solutions

Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design

Potential to be used as countywide goals and objectives for Flash BRT system



Community Equity

Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations



Economic Growth

Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit



Public Safety

Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities

Corridor Foundations

Developing Baseline Data and Understanding Existing Conditions

Establishing Corridor Foundations

Related Studies
& Projects

Demographics

Activity Density

Multimodal
Travel
Conditions

Land Use &
Development

Street Network

Multimodal
Connectivity

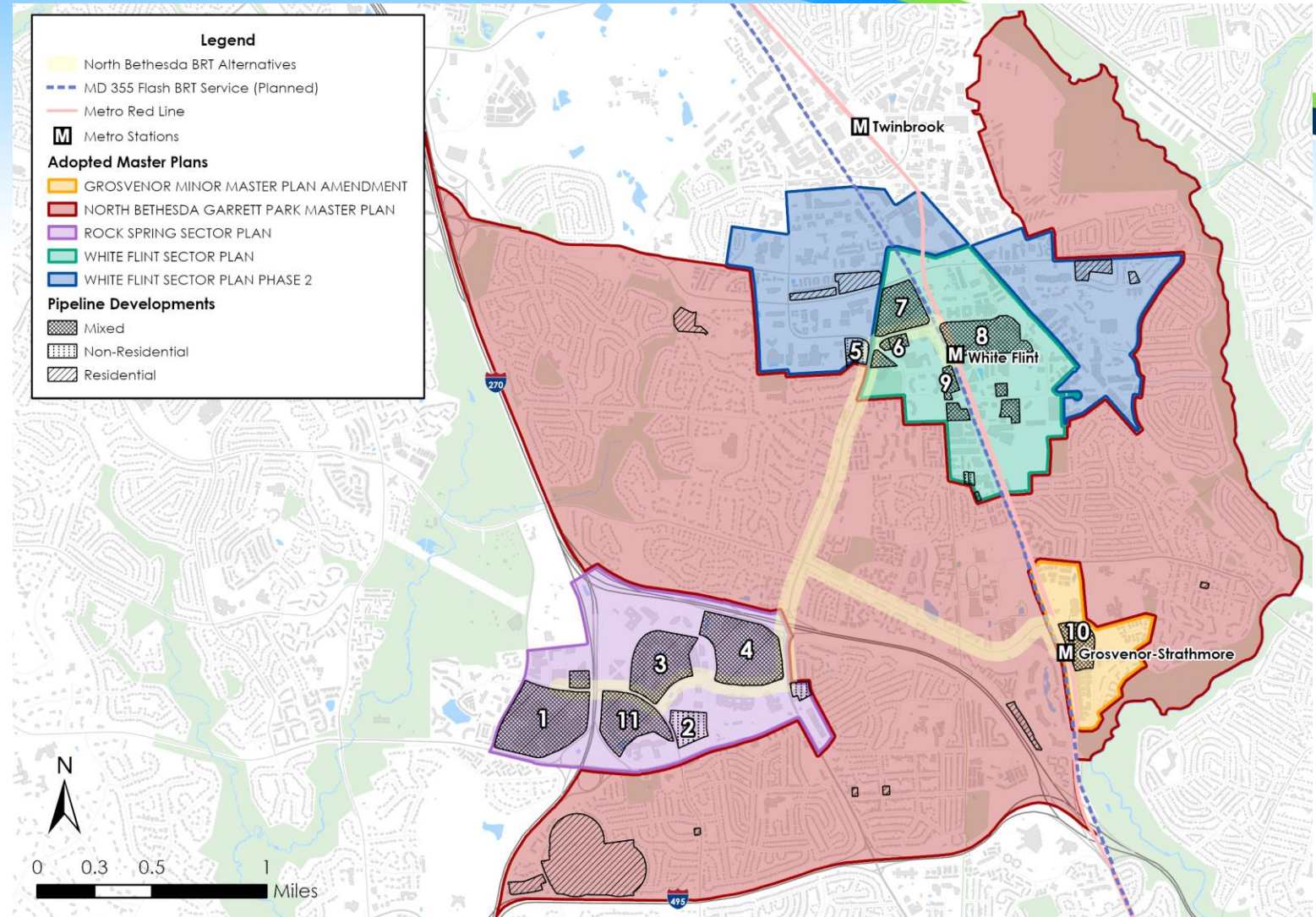
Transportation
Safety

Transit Service



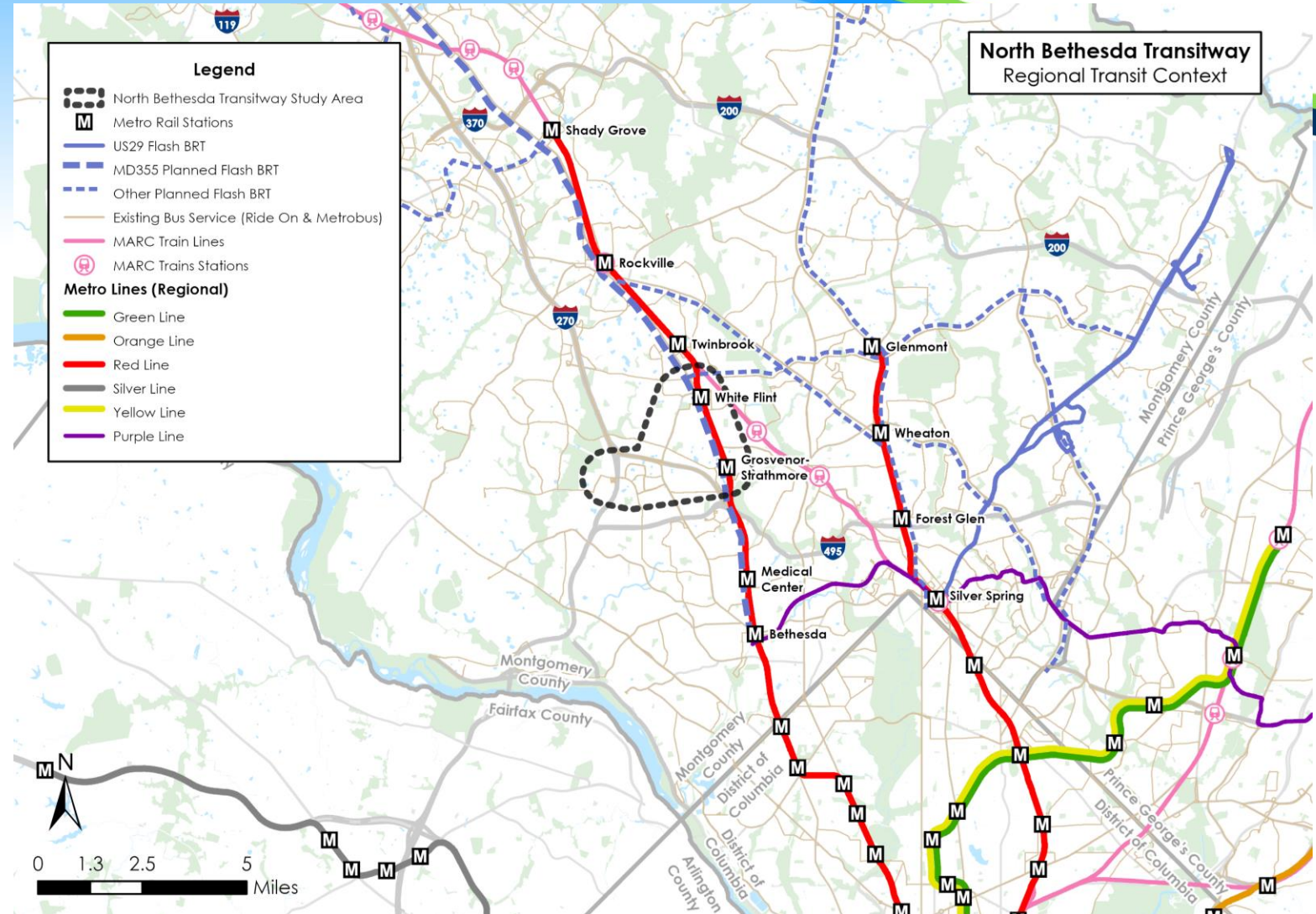
Key Opportunities

- Opportunity to connect diverse communities with jobs and retail in the study area
- Opportunity to increase transit mode share with high-quality transit
- New development provides opportunity for new ridership
- Sector plans assume robust transportation system to support new development



Key Opportunities

- Opportunity to connect to planned regional transit
- Opportunity to improve multimodal connectivity
- Opportunity to achieve Vision Zero goals
- Post-COVID travel patterns will need to be continually monitored, and may justify more all-day bus service

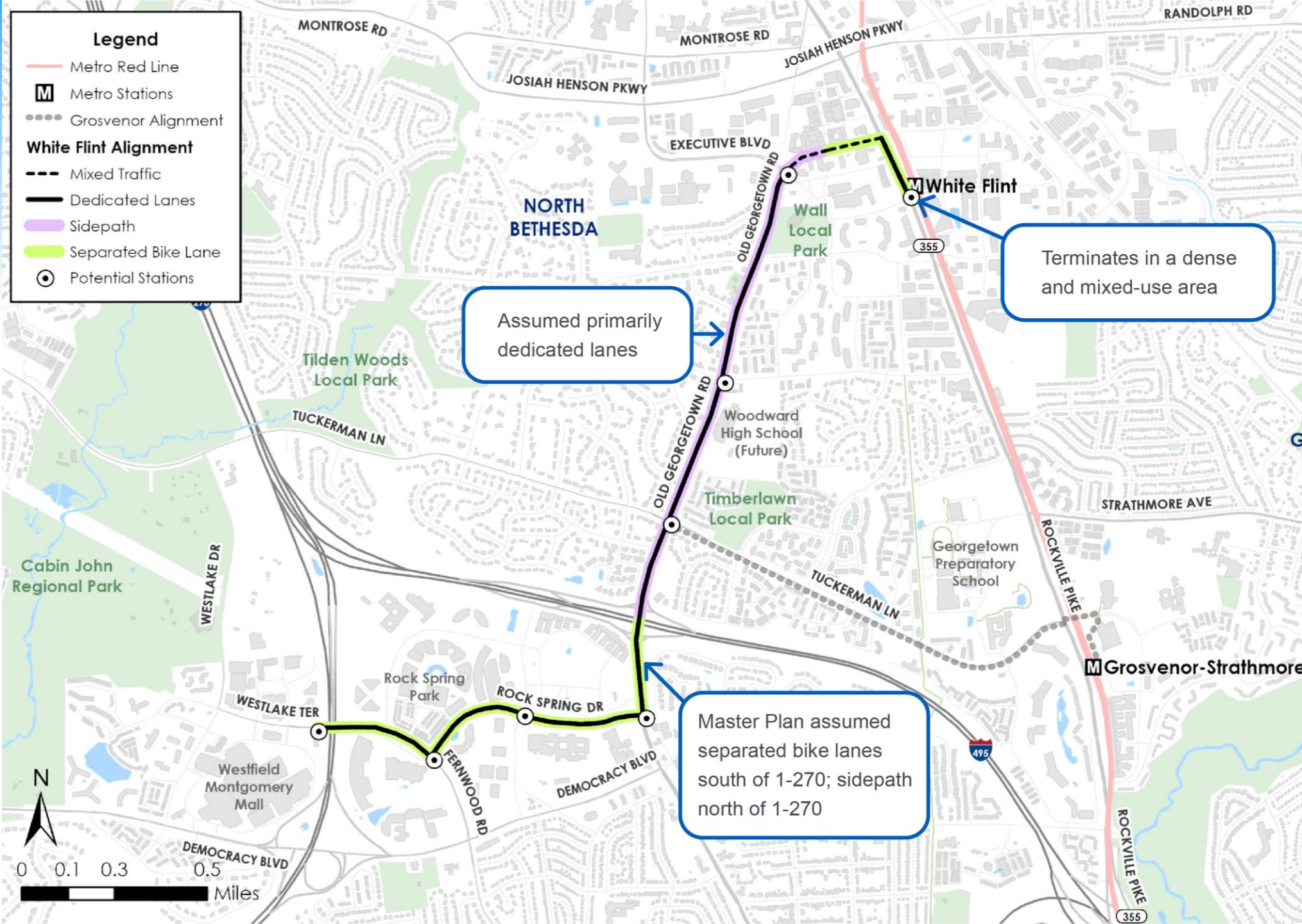


Termini Screening

Assessment and Comparison of the Eastern Terminus Alternatives

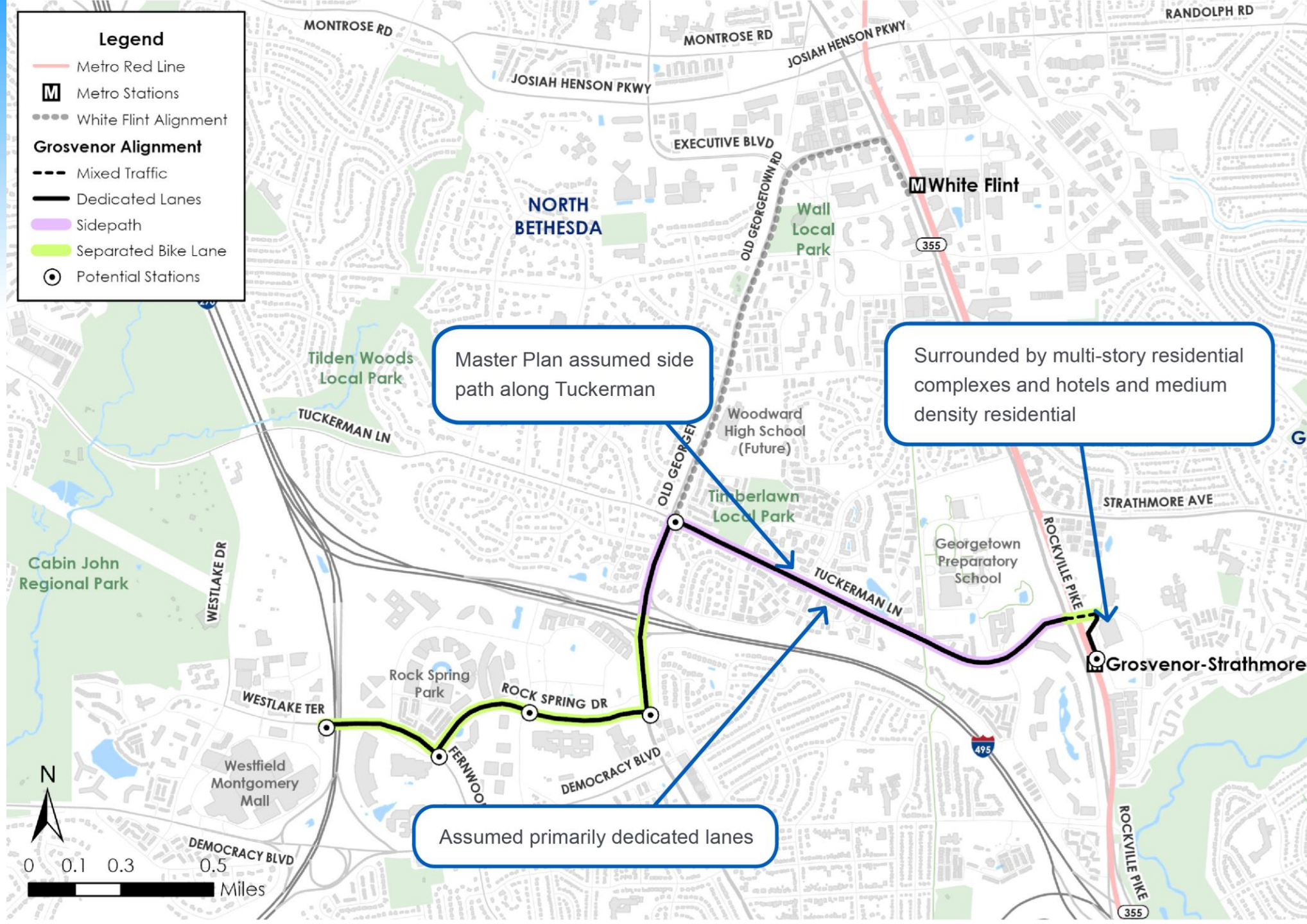
White Flint Alternative

NOTE: Alignment, station locations, dedicated lane assumptions, and pedestrian/bike facilities based on the County's Transitways Corridor Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and Bicycle Master Plan. All are subject to further analysis during the Build Alternatives Phase.



Grosvenor Alternative

NOTE: Alignment, station locations, dedicated lane assumptions, and pedestrian/bike facilities based on the County's Transitways Corridor Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and Bicycle Master Plan. All are subject to further analysis during the Build Alternatives Phase.



Metrics



Quality Service

Provide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service

- ✓ Existing Bus Stops' Boardings and Alightings along the Corridor
- ✓ Access for Existing Residents along the Corridor
- ✓ Existing Metrorail Ridership at Termini
- ✓ Potential to Improve Transit Reliability
- ✓ Increase Of Service Frequency and Span
- ✓ Minimizing Impacts to Traffic Flow
- ✓ Connections to Planned BRT Network
- ✓ Regional Connectivity



Community Equity

Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations

- ✓ Access for Low-Income Households
- ✓ Access for Zero-Car Households
- ✓ Access for Low-English Proficiency Populations
- ✓ Access for Seniors
- ✓ Access for Persons with Disabilities
- ✓ Access for Minority Populations
- ✓ Access for Lower Paying Jobs
- ✓ Number of Equity Focus Areas within 3/4 mile of alignment



Mobility Choices

Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities

- ✓ Access to Community Facilities
- ✓ Access to Existing Jobs
- ✓ Connections to Existing and Planned Bike Network



Economic Growth

Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit

- ✓ Connections to Planned Development
- ✓ Projected Future Activity (Jobs and People) Along Corridor
- ✓ Support for Transit Oriented Development



Sustainable Solutions

Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design

- ✓ Potential Right of Way Expansion Needed
- ✓ Level of Infrastructure Investment
- ✓ Operational Cost
- ✓ Potential to Support Electric Fleet









Public Safety

Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities

- ✓ Potential to Improve Vulnerable Road Users (VRU) Safety
- ✓ Potential to Improve Vehicular Safety
- ✓ Connection to Green Space

Termini Screening Results

Goals and Objectives		White Flint	Grosvenor	Rationale
 Quality Service	<i>Provide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service</i>	←		White Flint Alternative serves more existing local bus trips and overall regional trips
 Mobility Choices	<i>Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities</i>	←		White Flint alternative serves more existing jobs and community facilities with more travel choices
 Sustainable Solutions	<i>Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design</i>		→	Grosvenor alternative requires a less significant investment in infrastructure and potential right-of-way impacts
 Community Equity	<i>Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations</i>	←		More disadvantaged populations live along or are connected to the White Flint alternative
 Economic Growth	<i>Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit</i>	←		White Flint better aligns with planned development
 Public Safety	<i>Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities</i>		●	Both alternatives improve public safety on the corridor

Which Alternative Best Achieves the Goal?

No Notable Advantage



Some Advantage



Significant Advantage





Questions and Comments

Available Information

Scan This To Access
the **Project Webpage**



Scan This To View the
Project StoryMap





Thank You

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TERMINI SCREENING REPORT CARD



Learn More!
Visit the project webpage to
learn more about the study

Study Background

- The North Bethesda Transitway was proposed in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan to connect the Westfield Montgomery Mall and Metrorail Red Line.
- It is one of 10 proposed bus rapid transit (BRT) routes in the County's Flash BRT system.
- Two alternatives were identified for the BRT's eastern terminus (end point):
 - White Flint Metrorail Station
 - Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station
- The purpose of this study is to determine if and what type of BRT service is needed in this area to connect between key activity centers.



The North Bethesda Transitway study is currently in the Termini Screening phase, during which an eastern terminus will be selected. Next, more details of the route and service will be developed and analyzed.

Termini Screening Process

Following the Corridor Foundations Report, which details the current conditions of the project area, the Termini Screening assessed the two eastern terminus alternatives for the North Bethesda Transitway. Each alternative was screened using various metrics to determine which alternative better aligns with the North Bethesda BRT goals and objectives.

Alternative Results Summary

Goals and Objectives	White Flint	Grosvenor	Rationale
Quality Service: Provide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service	←		White Flint alternative serves more existing local bus trips and overall regional trips
Mobility Choices: Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities	←		White Flint alternative serves more existing jobs and community facilities with more travel choices
Sustainable Solutions: Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design		→	Grosvenor alternative requires a less significant investment in infrastructure and potential right-of-way impacts
Community Equity: Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations	←		More disadvantaged populations live along or are connected to the White Flint alternative
Economic Growth: Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit	←		White Flint alternative better aligns with planned development
Public Safety: Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities		●	Both alternatives improve public safety on the corridor

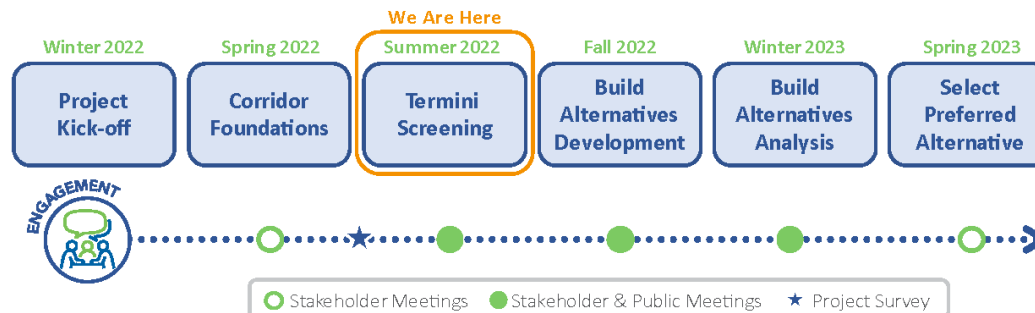
Which Alternative Best Achieves the Goal?

No Notable Advantage ●

Some Advantage ↔

Significant Advantage ↔

The following pages of this report card detail the full results of the termini screening

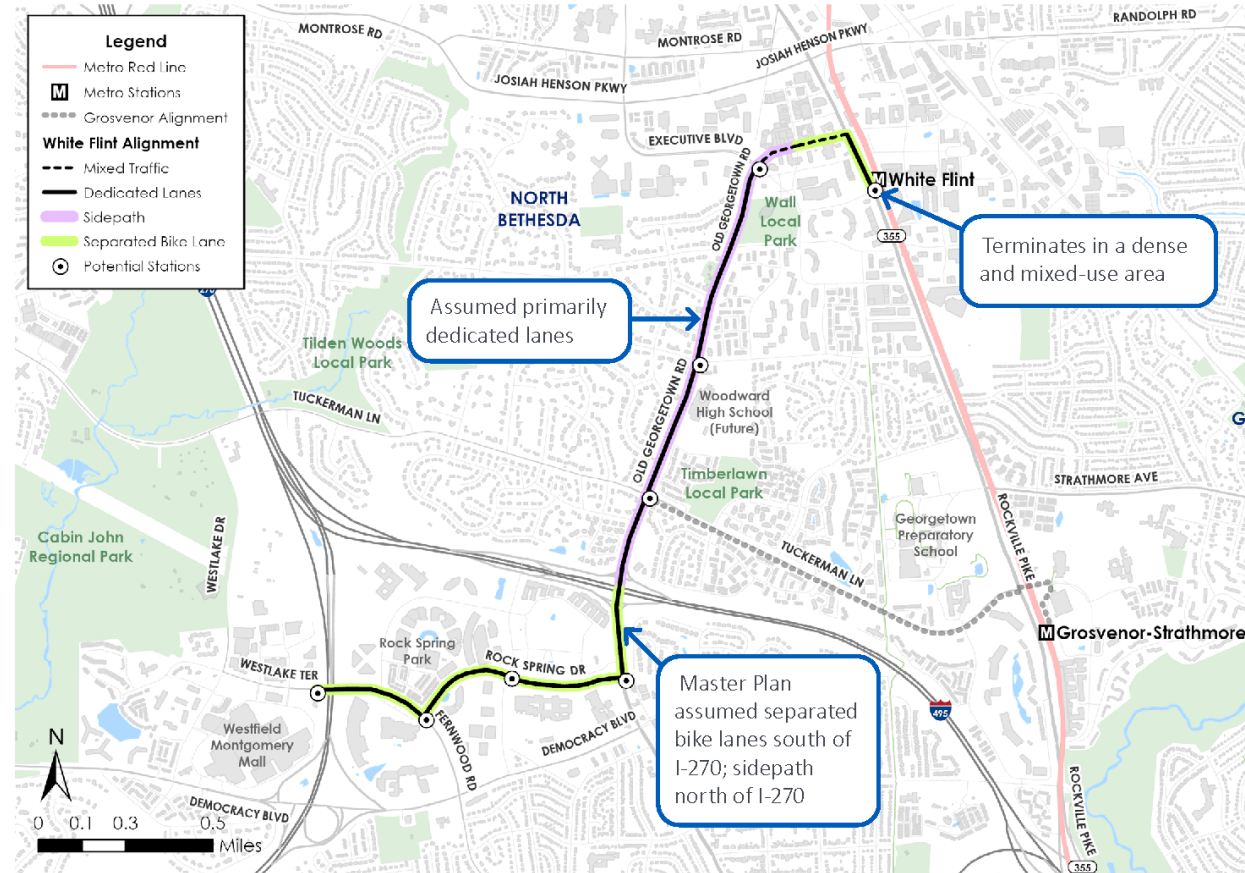


TERMINI SCREENING REPORT CARD

White Flint Alternative

Key Takeaways:

-  Serves **more existing bus ridership** (approximately 450 more, or 40% more riders per weekday)
-  Serves almost **double the number of jobs** (approximately 41,000 compared with 24,000) and community facilities (28 versus 16) including recreation centers, schools, and medical facilities
-  Will strengthen and **promote 9.3 million square feet of planned development**, approximately double the planned development
-  **Better supports forecasted change in people and jobs.** The White Flint corridor has a 31% forecast growth from 2020 to 2030, whereas Grosvenor's projected change is 2%
-  **Better opportunity to increase countywide and regional connectivity** and attracting approximately 44% more regional trips
-  Provides improved service to a **higher number of low-income and minority populations, low-paying jobs, and equity emphasis areas**



NOTE: Alignment, station locations, dedicated lane assumptions, and pedestrian/bike facilities based on the County's Transitways Corridor Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and Bicycle Master Plan. All are subject to further analysis during the Build Alternatives Phase.

TERMINI SCREENING REPORT CARD

Grosvenor Alternative

Key Takeaways:



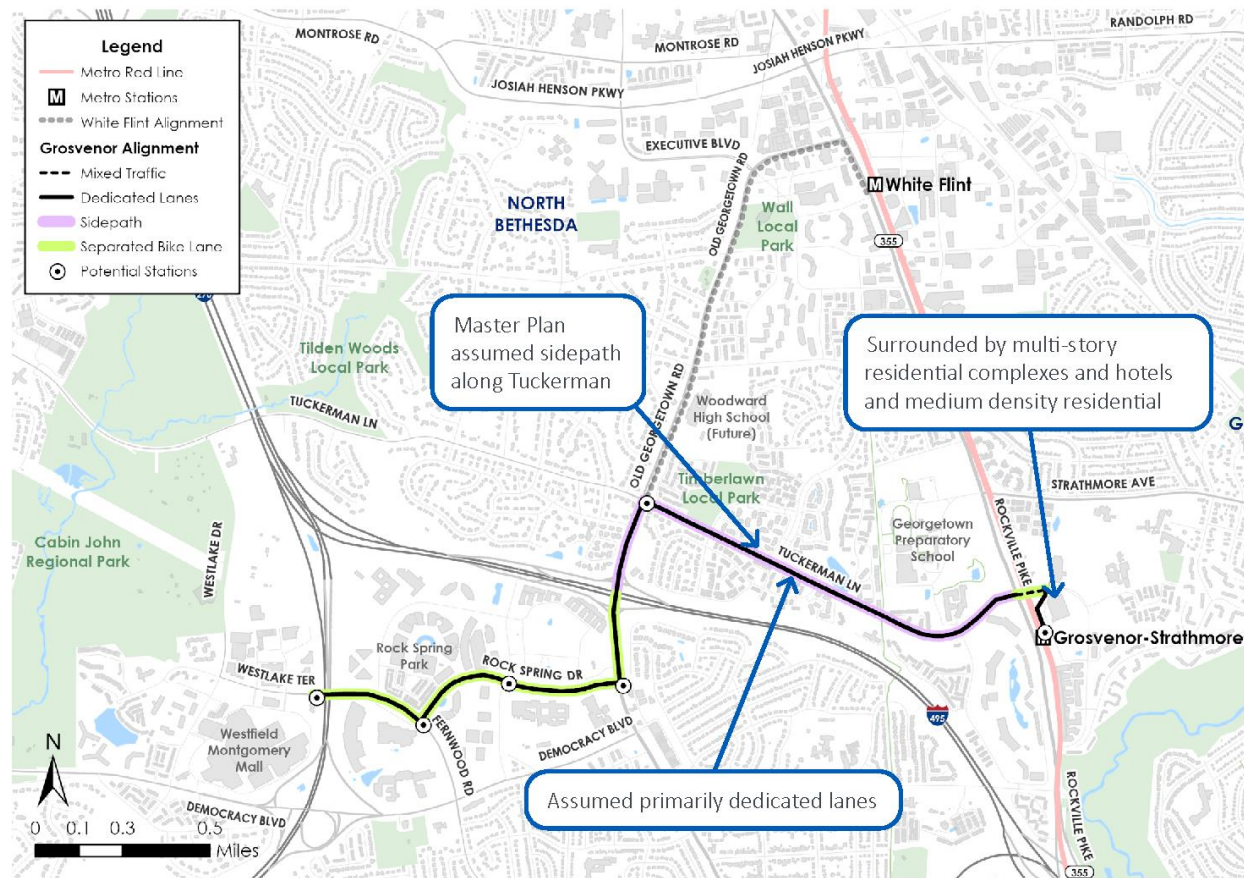
Serves **more pre-pandemic Metrorail riders** likely due to the presence of parking facilities



Lower level of infrastructure investment and potential right-of-way needed which would indicate a **lower cost and potentially shorter construction timeline** based on assumed stations and lane configuration






Serves more existing land use that is **supportive of transit**






NOTE: Alignment, station locations, dedicated lane assumptions, and pedestrian/bike facilities based on the County's Transitways Corridor Master Plan, Master Plan of Highways and Transitways, and Bicycle Master Plan. All are subject to further analysis during the Build Alternatives Phase.

TERMINI SCREENING REPORT CARD

Goals and Objectives	Termini Screening Metrics	Score	
		White Flint	Grosvenor
 Quality Service Provide a fast, reliable, efficient, and connected transit service	Existing Bus Stops' Boardings and Alightings along the Corridor	●	●
	Access for Existing Residents along the Corridor	●	●
	Existing Metrorail Ridership at Termini	●	●
	Potential to Improve Transit Reliability	●	●
	Increase Of Service Frequency and Span	●	●
	Minimizing Impacts to Traffic Flow	○	●
	Connections to Planned BRT Network	●	●
	Regional Connectivity	●	●
 Mobility Choices Improve access to jobs, activity centers, and community facilities	Access to Community Facilities	●	●
	Access to Existing Jobs	●	●
	Connections to Existing and Planned Bike Network	●	●
 Sustainable Solutions Minimize environmental impacts and utilize cost-effective design	Potential Right of Way Expansion Needed	○	●
	Level of Infrastructure Investment	○	●
	Operational Cost	●	●
	Potential to Support Electric Fleet	●	●

Score Key	
○	Negative or Negligible Impact Towards Goal
●	Supports Achieving Goal
●	Best Alternative for Supporting Achievement of Goal (greater than 15% difference)

TERMINI SCREENING REPORT CARD

Goals and Objectives	Termini Screening Metrics	Score	
		White Flint	Grosvenor
 Community Equity Provide improved and accessible transit service for underserved populations	Access for Low-Income Households	●	●
	Access for Zero-Car Households	●	●
	Access for Low-English Proficiency Populations	●	●
	Access for Seniors	●	●
	Access for Persons with Disabilities	●	●
	Access for Minority Populations	●	●
	Access for Lower Paying Jobs	●	●
	Number of Equity Focus Areas within 3/4 mile of alignment	●	●
 Economic Growth Promote economic development with appealing and functional transit	Connections to Planned Development	●	●
	Projected Future Activity (Jobs and People) Along Corridor	●	●
	Support for Transit Oriented Development	●	●
 Public Safety Improve safety of our streets and the livability and wellness of our communities	Potential to Improve Vulnerable Road Users (VRU) Safety	●	●
	Potential to Improve Vehicular Safety	●	●
	Connection to Green Space	●	●

Score Key	
○	Negative or Negligible Impact Towards Goal
●	Supports Achieving Goal
●	Best Alternative for Supporting Achievement of Goal (greater than 15% difference)